

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

Am 017

1. A method of providing cameras to consumers in exchange for a commitment, the method comprising
- 5 receiving a request by a consumer for a camera;
- determining if the consumer has at least a first financial instrument;
- receiving a commitment by the consumer to purchase at least a first amount of image reproductions within a selected amount of time;
- 10 providing the consumer with the camera, where the camera is a digital camera, at least partly in response to the consumer entering into the commitment and determining that that consumer has the at least first financial instrument;
- encrypting at least a first image taken with the camera, wherein the encryption is intended to prevent the consumer from having prints of the first image made from a source not associated with the camera provider;
- 15 receiving and decrypting the encrypted first image; and
- printing the decrypted first image.
2. The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising allowing images taken with the camera to be displayed on a camera display.
3. The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising allowing low resolution versions of images taken with the camera to be transferred from the camera.
- 20 4. The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising:
- receiving an order for an image print from someone other than the consumer; and
- crediting the consumer's commitment fulfillment based on the order.
5. The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising:
- 25 receiving an order for an image reproduction from someone other than the consumer; and
- providing the consumer a benefit based on the order.
- Am 017* 6. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the encrypted first image is received from a terminal to which the first image has been transferred from the camera.

7. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein images taken by the camera are encrypted by the camera until the consumer has fulfilled the commitment and an unlocking code has been received by the camera.

8. The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising receiving in association with the first encrypted image at least one of ISO equivalency information, aperture setting information, and shutter speed information.

9. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the camera is provided at least partly in response to an amount paid by the consumer for the camera, wherein the amount is related to the number of reproductions the consumer committed to purchase.

10. A method of providing a camera to a user, the method comprising:

receiving a commitment by the user to purchase at least a first amount of image reproductions; and

providing the user with the camera at least partly in response to the user entering into the commitment.

11. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising storing camera usage information.

12. The method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising selecting advertising to be presented to the user based at least in part on the camera usage information.

13. The method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising modifying camera performance based at least in part on the camera usage information.

14. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising predicting camera battery life based at least in part on the number of pictures taken with the camera during a predetermined time period.

15. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising predicting when camera memory will be full based at least in part on the number of pictures taken with the camera during a predetermined time period.

16. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising modifying camera energy management based at least in part on the number of pictures taken with the camera during a predetermined time period.

17. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein at least a portion of the camera usage information is stored in camera memory.

18. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein at least a portion of the camera usage information is stored on a server associated with a Web site.

Day 19. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the encryption is performed by the camera on at least a first image captured by the camera.

5 20. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the type of camera provided is based at least in part on the extent of the commitment.

21. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the first amount is a dollar amount.

10 22. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the first amount is a quantity of image reproductions.

23. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising:

receiving user profile information; and

storing at least a portion of the user profile information in the camera.

15 24. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the commitment is to be fulfilled within a predetermined amount of time.

25. The method as defined in Claim 24, further comprising fixing the price to the user of at least a first type of image reproduction for at least the predetermined amount of time.

20 26. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising receiving an order for hard copy image reproductions, where the user places the order using a camera user interface.

27. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising receiving an order for hard copy image reproductions over a network.

25 28. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising receiving over a network images taken with the camera and receiving camera setting information associated with the images.

29. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising downloading an advertisement into the camera and displaying the advertisement on a camera display.

30 30. The method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising receiving a designation from the user as to which print house is to print images ordered by the user.

31. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the camera is provided by a print house.

32. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the camera is provided by a camera manufacturer to an intermediary at a discount, who then provides the camera to the user, and the intermediary causes the camera manufacturer to be paid an amount based at least in part on user orders for image reproductions.

33. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the camera is provided with no initial cost or charge to the user.

34. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the camera is provided at a reduced cost to the user in exchange for the commitment.

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35. A method of providing a camera, comprising:

- renting a camera to a user in exchange for a first fee;
- receiving at a computer at least one image taken with the camera;
- receiving an order for a reproduction of the at least one image; and
- applying at least a portion of the first fee towards the cost of the order.

36. The method as defined in Claim 35, wherein the camera is rented at an automated kiosk.

37. The method as defined in Claim 35, wherein the user is charged an additional fee if the camera is not returned within a predetermined amount of time.

38. The method as defined in Claim 35, wherein the computer is located remotely from where the camera was rented.

39. The method as defined in Claim 35, wherein an additional fee is charged for orders costing more than the first fee.

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40. A method of providing a camera, comprising:

- receiving a camera from a camera manufacturer at a first price, wherein the camera is received by a distributor;
- providing the camera to a consumer at a second price;
- receiving payment from the consumer for image reproductions of images captured with the camera; and
- paying the camera manufacturer at least a first amount based at least in part on the payment received from the consumer.

41. The method as defined in Claim 40, where the camera manufacturer provides the camera at a discount in return for a commitment on the part of the distributor that the camera manufacturer will be paid said at least first amount.

5 *Part B, 7*

42. A method of providing a camera to a user, the method comprising:

receiving a commitment by the user to lease the camera for a predetermined period;

providing the user with a first number of prints at no additional cost as part of the lease; and

committing to provide additional prints beyond the first number of prints

10 for no more than a predetermined fee.

43. The method of providing a camera to a user as defined in Claim 42, further comprising providing the camera to the user.

44. The method of providing a camera to a user as defined in Claim 42, further comprising selling the camera to the user after a first period.

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